VIETNAM COURIER

October 14
1968
No 186
5th Year

Information Weekly — E.O. : 46 Tran Hung Dao Street, Hanoi — Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

N.F.L. flag flutters at Go Dau townlet (Tay Ninh province, South Viet Nam)

UNIV. MICH. LIBRARY NOV 27 1968

South Viet Nam

NEW U.S. DISASTER IN BEN TRE:

19 BOATS SUNK OR BURNT, ABOUT 1,000 G.I.s PUT OUT OF ACTION

(September 29 to October 21)

North of Saigon: A Regrouped Position Held by 4 Enemy Companies Destroyed at Xa Cam. 300 Enemy Troops Put out of Action and 40 Armoured Cars Destroyed Near Loc Ninh.

★ Many U.S.—Puppet Companies Wiped Out in Various Theatres.

★ *Guerrilla September Battle Count in 10 Provinces: 1,400 Enemy Troops Including Numerous G.I.s Killed or Wounded by "Rudimentary" Weapons and Traps.*

Page 8

North Viet Nam

The 3,200th U.S. plane

was downed on October 9 with 4 rounds over VINH LINH

Foreign and Water Conservancy Ministries Condemn Stepped-Up U.S. Raids on Coasts, Dykes and Irrigation Projects

THE Foreign Ministry of the D.R.V.N. issued on October 8 a statement condemning the intensified attacks by the U.S. imperialists on the coastal areas of the D.R.V.N.

The statement reads:

"At 21 hours on October 6, 1968, U.S. commando ships under the cover of destroyers and aircraft wantonly shelled boats near the Day rivermouth in Ninh Binh province. On the same day, at 17:15 hours, a group of U.S. commando boats pounded Hon Me island in Thanh Hoa province. Over recent days, many other U.S. vessels have repeatedly entered the territorial waters of the D.R.V.N. and attacked many civilian boats and houses along the coast from Ninh Binh to Vinh Linh area.

"This new, extremely serious escalation of the U.S. imperialists brazenly flouted the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam and all international laws. Obviously the U.S. persists in escalating its attacks on the D.R.V.N. and is deliberately pushing up its war of aggression against South Viet Nam. Such steps further expose the duplicity of U.S. claims about "self-restraint" and "search for peace".

The Ministry of Water Conservancy also made public on October 5 a statement denouncing the U.S. imperialists' intensified air attacks on North Viet Nam's dykes and water conservancy projects.

The statement reads:

"Last September, the U.S. imperialists, taking advantage of heavy rains and big floods, intensified their attacks on the dykes and water conservancy projects in Nghe An, Ha Tinh and Quang Binh provinces.

"From September 9 to 29, their aircraft dropped explosive and time bombs on Nghe An's dyke network along the Lam river, heavily damaging 138 portions of dyke and perpetrating other crimes against the Vietnamese people:

"— On September 9, their planes attacked many dyke portions in Nam Dan district. On the same day, U.S. planes wantonly rained bombs on people who were repairing the damaged dyke sections in Hung Chau village, Hung Nguyen district, and killed or wounded many of them.

"— On September 10, the dyke portions in Nam Hong and Nam Tien villages, Nam Dan district were again raided and seriously damaged.

"— On September 11, 4 F.4s released 32 500-kilo explosive bombs, killing or wounding 30 people then busy reinforcing the dykes.

"— On September 15, 16 and 17, U.S. aircraft coming in many flights dumped tons of explosive, steel-pellet and

(Continued page 4)

Let's Go Behind U.S. Profuse Profession of Peace

"OUR most urgent task in South-East Asia is to end the war in Viet Nam," stated the U.S. Democratic National Convention. "We pledge a programme for peace in Viet Nam," declared the Republican political platform.

And the presidential candidates of these two parties were no less emphatic:

"I have pledged that my first priority as President shall be to end the war and obtain an honorable peace." (Humphrey).

"To-night, I pledge that the number one priority in foreign policy of the coming administration is to bring the Viet Nam war to an honorable end." (Nixon)

Such declarations, however, do not surpass those of the incumbent of U.S. Presidency, Lyndon B. Johnson, as professions of peace. "We yearn for the day when violence subsides. We yearn for the day when our men can come home"; that is what he said on September 10, 1968 to members of the American Legion.

Why U.S. present or would be Presidents have made all these pronouncements?

The reason is very simple: the war in Viet Nam, which they had expected to be "painless," has turned out to be a real disaster for America. After throwing into action 72 per cent of their infantry and paratroop forces, 50 per cent of their air units and 64 per cent of their naval striking forces, the U.S. imperialists have found out in the end that they will not succeed in getting the better of a people, inferior in economic and military strength, but united as a single man and determined to fight, under a wise leadership, in defence of their independence and freedom. While this war appears right now to have been lost to the aggressors, Americans of all social strata raise their voices for its termination. Let us listen, among others, to this verdict by a qualified representative of U.S. oligarchy, Marriner S. Eccles, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve System, before 500 bankers and industrialists on June 27 last: "The Viet Nam war is responsible for the most serious economic, financial

(Continued page 2)

CENTENARY OF HEROIC CUBA'S REVOLUTION

(October 10, 1968)

THE centenary of the Cuban revolutionary struggle fell on October 10, 1968. The one hundred years which elapsed since Carlos Manuel de Cespedez and the black slaves of the La Demajagua sugar refinery rose up on October 10, 1868, has been for our Cuban friends a century of bloody sacrifices, and of an arduous and heroic but glorious struggle.

In the middle of the 14th century Cuba was with Puerto Rico the last Spanish colony in Latin America. Half a million Iberian troops rode roughshod on the island without being able to crush the will for independence and freedom of the local people who put up a long and indomitable struggle beset with trials but full of exploits.

In 1899, in face of the imminent collapse of the Spanish forces, the U.S. Government declared war on Spain and under the pretext of helping the Cuban people, occupied by force the Island of Freedom. Two years later, the U.S. Congress passed a law forcing Cuba to inscribe in her constitution recognition of U.S. right to intervene in her internal affairs, to lease part of her territory as sites for U.S. military bases and depots. From a Spanish colony, Cuba thus became an American possession. The Cuban people had to resume their fight for independence and freedom. Though the agency of such sanguinary executioners sold out to the U.S. as Machado and Batista, American dollars and arms visited ruins and mourning on the whole territory of Cuba. Mella, Villena, Guiteras and hundreds of other revolutionary militants gallantly fell in the course of that struggle. The Moncada July 26, 1953 armed insurrection heralded the third stage of the war for the liberation of Cuba which ended on January 1, 1959 with the investing of Havana by the revolutionary forces under national hero Fidel Castro.

"Attack, attack relentlessly," such is the revolutionary battlecry of the Cuban people. After wresting power from the hands of the American aggressors, the Cuban people, instead of stopping short, carried out the socialist revolution and have been building socialism, thwarting all designs and aggressive plots of U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. At present, Cuba has become the first free and socialist nation and the standard bearer of Latin America and the Western hemisphere. Her people is now building an "independent nation worthy of its great future" to meet the wish of the Cespedez insurgents a century ago when they took up arms with the "Freedom or Death!" watchword.

The Vietnamese people are very proud of having such heroic a brother and comrade-in-arms as the Cuban people.

On the occasion of the centenary of their revolution, we send them our militant salutations and wish them greater victories in the glorious revolutionary struggle.

(Excerpts from Nhan Dan *Editorial of October 10, 1968.)*

PARIS TALKS' 25th SESSION

THE 25th session of the official conversations between the representative of the D.R.V.N. Government and that of the U.S. Government took place in Paris on October 9.

Taking the floor first, Minister of State Xuan Thuy made a general review of the talks in the past five months. He pointed out that until now there had been no progress in the parley because of U.S. persisting pursuance of the aggressive war against Viet Nam and refusal to settle the main issue which is to ascertain U.S. unconditional cessation of the bombing and all other acts of war on the whole territory of the D.R.V.N. so that other problems of concern to both sides can be discussed.

The Vietnamese representative recalled that in the past five months the U.S. had been levelling at the D.R.V.N. the absurd "aggression by the North against the South" charge and trying to embellish the Saigon puppet administration to justify the illegal presence of more than half a million U.S. aggressor troops in South Viet Nam and the U.S. war of destruction against the D.R.V.N. He also denounced U.S. wresting of the fundamental spirit of the Geneva Agreements to suit its intention of restricting the Vietnamese people's legitimate right of self-defence. It has raised many irrelevant questions such as Laos and Cambodia and repeated in different forms the preposterous claim for an indication of D.R.V.N. "reciprocity" and for a price for a halt of U.S. aggression.

The Vietnamese envoy went on to denounce U.S. increasing the level of war in both parts of Viet Nam, and made plain the legitimacy and certainty of the Vietnamese people's final victory and the inevitability of the U.S. aggressors' ultimate failure. He also spoke of the support given to the Vietnamese people by the socialist and nationalist countries and other peace-loving countries, the peoples of all walks of life in the world and also the American people.

Reaffirming the sound position and good will of the D.R.V.N. Government, Mr. Xuan Thuy quoted the statement made by Premier Pham Van Dong on September 2, 1968, and stressed: "While resolutely opposing U.S. aggression, the Vietnamese people are ready to seek a correct political settlement of the Viet Nam problem on the basis of the respect for their fundamental national rights as made clear in the four points of the D.R.V.N. Government and the Political Program of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation. This solution calls for U.S. ending of its aggression, withdrawal of U.S. and satellite troops from South Viet Nam, recognition of the South Viet Nam N.F.L. and negotiation with it on issues concerning South Viet Nam, and, as an immediate step, unconditional cessation of the bombing and all other acts of war against the D.R.V.N.

The D.R.V.N. chief negotiator recalled that many U.S. senators, political and social figures as well as many governments including those of France, Cambodia, Sweden, Finland, Ethiopia, Sudan, Tchad... had been insisting on a complete U.S. halt to the bombing of North Viet Nam.

He added:

"If President Johnson really wants to peacefully solve the Viet Nam problem, he still has enough time and power now to do so, so as to open the door to a settlement beneficial to the Vietnamese people, the American people, and world peace. If on the contrary the U.S. side only gives lip service to peace, whilst in fact pursuing its war of aggression, the Vietnamese people will continue to match President Ho Chi Minh's words with deeds: 'For the sake of independence and freedom, the 31 million of our compatriots, overcoming all hardships and sacrifices, are determined to fight and to win.'"

Speaking in his turn, U.S. representative Averell Harriman reiterated his plea for U.S. aggression in Viet Nam and his "North Viet Nam's violations of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Viet Nam" and "aggression against the South" slanderous charges. He kept eluding the crucial topic, the unconditional ending of the U.S. bombing of North Viet Nam. He obdurately repeating the absurd demand for "reciprocity."

All these quibbles were disposed of by his Vietnamese counterpart who said: "If there must be two to achieve peace as the U.S. said, the D.R.V.N. is ready to discuss with the U.S. side problems of concern to both parties, once the U.S. unconditionally ends the bombing and all other acts of war on the whole territory of the D.R.V.N."

THE NORTH—GREAT REAR BASE OF THE SOUTH

"All for Victory over U.S. Aggressors"

— *Appeal of the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front*

IN early October 1968, the Central Committee of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front held its 16th Plenary Session.

Voicing the aspirations of the entire people—both in the North and the South—the Conference approved an important resolution on immediate tasks.

"...Strictly implementing President Ho Chi Minh's instructions in his Appeal of July 20, 1968, the Conference has decided to put the people and armed forces on their mettle to add further successes to their former successes, increase political and armed forces, strengthen their position of offensive in every field, cause heavier setbacks to the enemy and finally inflict on them a total defeat.

"For the accomplishment of this glorious work, the Conference has set the following major tasks for the organizations and personalities in the Front:

"1. To achieve the best results in the present political drive under the slogan: 'All for our victory over the U.S. aggressors.'

"2. To stimulate the people to ceaselessly keep up their revolutionary vigilance, to take an active part in the fighting and to serve it with zeal.

"3. To fire the people into pushing up the patriotic emulation campaign for the successful fulfilment of the 1968 State plan.

"4. To see to the satisfactory implementation of various policies and regulations, to broaden the right of the people as collective master of the State, to organize to the hilt the life of the people and increase the people's forces so that production and combat can be kept up for a long duration.

"5. To inspirit the people to strengthen international solidarity.

The resolution wound up with an appeal to the whole people to overcome difficulties and stand up to trials and bring to a victorious end the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation.

Hanoi in the Vanguard Against American Aggression

Editor's Note: *Fourteen years ago, on October 10, 1954, Hanoi was liberated from French colonial domination. Since then, the capital of the D.R.V.N. has undergone radical changes and recorded ever greater achievements.*

SINCE June 25, 1965, when the first American aircraft was shot down over Hanoi, the city has so far (Oct. 11) brought down 257 U.S. planes and killed or captured a large number of American air pirates. The 1,600th, 2,000th, 2,300th, 2,500th and 2,880th enemy planes were shot to pieces over Hanoi.

Hanoi's anti-aircraft defence has proved highly efficient. Hundreds of kilometres of communication trenches and trench shelters, hundreds of thousands of manholes have been dug. The people, evacuated from the city, have quickly resumed a normal life and gone on with their production work and combat duties in new economic and cultural establishments dispersed in the countryside. While tens of thousands of young people have joined the army or the Young Volunteers' Brigades working on the communications front, those staying behind devote themselves body and soul to the building of socialism and have so far obtained encouraging results.

In spite of U.S. air raids, production has been maintained and developed. Over the last few years, 28 new industrial enterprises have been set up, many others transformed and enlarged. At present Hanoi's own regional industry (not counting centrally-run undertakings) includes 96 State and joint State-private enterprises and 331 co-operatives. By the end of September this year, 74 per cent of the yearly plan figure had been attained, i.e. an increase of 4.4 per cent compared with the same period in 1967.

In the same period, the global output of centrally-run enterprises has been up 62.6 per cent compared with 1963. In the outskirts, 94.4 per cent of the peasant households have joined the co-operatives, all of which have become advanced-type ones. Water conservancy works ensure irrigation for 85 per cent of the cultivated area; 70 villages out of a total of 102 have electricity, and 252 co-ops are equipped with small farming machines. Last year, the average rice output was already 3.17 tons per hectare. Great efforts have been made to maintain communications and transport under all circumstances, and goods and passenger traffic has even surpassed the planned target.

In the cultural field, constant progress has been made. Enrolment in general education schools is nearing the 300,000 mark; 70,000 of the children have been praised as "Good Nephews and Nieces of Uncle Ho"; 700 of them have received the highest grades in all subjects. Complementary education has also developed both quantitatively and qualitatively: over the last two years, the number of adults going to complementary education classes has gone up 6-11 per cent, compared with the planned figure. The health network has spread to hamlet level in the outskirts and street level in the city. Other cultural activities—clubs, libraries, various artistic activities—have also known a great development.

During the last three years of struggle against American aggression, for national salvation, Hanoi has always proved worthy of its role as capital of the socialist North and "heart of the fatherland." It has set many examples of noble self-sacrifices and revolutionary heroism: it now has 5 hero-collectives, 7 Labour and Army heroes, 13 workshops and 1,099 work teams, or brigades recognised as Socialist Labour Units, 90 "Determined to Win" army units, and thousands of elite fighters of the patriotic emulation movement. It has received from the National Assembly and the Government one of the highest awards: the Independence Order, First Class.

Hoa Binh Province:

Local Industry Keeps Growing in Wartime

A mountain province, Hoa Binh has a less than 300,000 population belonging to 8 different ethnic groups. Jungles and mountains cover 72.24 per cent of its total area and yield many valuable forest products. Timber reserves alone are estimated at 7 million cubic metres. It is also reputed for its mineral riches. Preliminary prospecting work shows that its subsoil harbours at least 20 kinds of ore deposits and coal, limestone, guano, natural cement, etc...

For all its great potential wealth and abundant manpower, there existed under the former French domination, in the province only a few lime and brick kilns and smithies worked by handicraft methods and grouped in district towns, apart from a few electric and water supply plants with a very low capacity designed to meet the needs of the rulers and well-to-do persons in the provincial capital. During the first Resistance War, these establishments had been heavily destroyed. After liberation, Hoa Binh begun rehabilitating and developing its regional industry which did not take shape until 1958. By 1965, general output value had increased by 112 per cent compared with 1960. The average annual rate of increase was 40.4 per cent for State-run industry and 19.2 per cent for handicrafts.

Since the U.S. aggressors started their war of destruction against the D.R.V.N., under the policy of local industrial development suitable to wartime conditions, Hoa Binh industry has experienced a powerful growth.

Mainly relying on its own resources, it has launched a campaign for mass participation in industrial build-up. Everybody, including minority peoples living scattered in hilltop villages, voluntarily contributed building materials, did their shares in the transporting of machines and equipment, the clearing of roads leading to construction sites and building of huts to protect the machinery and sent their children to vocational schools, etc...

In the building and development of regional industry, Hoa Binh was the first mountain province to build small-size hydro-electric and water-power stations and engineering works. Today it has 42 such stations responsible for an electricity supply 3 times as great as in 1965. The engineering structure has been expanded substantially down to districts and villages. Newly-built industrial enterprises have increased by 46 per cent and output value by 33.5 per cent compared with 1965. Hoa Binh's industry has been able to put out 150 different lines of goods. A developed commercialised economy has replaced the old self-sufficient one. This can find clear evidence in the case of "February Third" Engineering Works. Formerly, this enterprise had only a few handicraft smithies and an obsolete hand-operated lathe and its products were restricted to a few items of goods of general use. Today it has become a fairly big engineering plant equipped with over 50 different types of machine tools, including modern equipment and its products cover as many as 67 articles of high technical standard, such as easily transportable rice husking machines for upland regions, automatic turbines for small engineering works, machines for the processing of animal fodder, etc... "February Third" can also produce complete sets of equipment for small-size water-driven engineering facilities.

"Aid-agriculture" is the main concern of Hoa Binh's industry. District engineering workshops are capable of producing and repairing a major part of improved farm implements while production and repair of simple implements is handled by small-industry co-ops and smithies and carpentry shops run by agricultural co-ops.

Compared with 1965, output of industrial goods for agriculture in 1967 increased by 36 per cent. Of the total 22 hydro-electric and water-power stations, 16 water-power stations are complexes helping operate machine-tools in small engineering works and at the same time irrigating over 5,500 hectares of riefields, of which 1,400 hectares were devoted to 2 crops yearly instead of one as formerly. The province now has 80 engineering units serving agriculture as against only 2 formerly, and this brings about an increase of from 17 to 20 times in the amount of threshed rice and from 35 to 40 times in that of husked rice, compared with the past. As a result, some heavy jobs in farm work have been lightened, and every year more than 800,000 work-day units thus saved are used for the preparation of manure and the tending of the crops. Thanks to the technical equipment by industry, new relations of production in agriculture have been further strengthened and the technical revolution pushed ahead in the rural areas. From approximately 3 tons per hectare per annum previously, rice yield in Hoa Binh has now risen to 5.8 over 4 tons. From a monoculture area, Hoa Binh has been gradually moving towards a developed agriculture.

Its industry has also paid attention to serving local forest project, by providing it with more tools or facilities. In recent years, forest exploitation has been receiving substantial gains. Compared with the peacetime period, output grew by 158 per cent for timber and 214 per cent for bamboo.

Hoa Binh's regional industry has also been able to produce many items of consumer goods to meet the everyday needs of the local people, such as fuel, building material, textiles, tools, writing paper, earthen and glass ware, wooden articles, wine, drugs, etc.. Output of consumer goods in 1967 went up by 157 per cent compared with 1965.

Every year, on an average, each inhabitant in the province sells to the state 10 kilos of food, 10 kilos of pork, 3 kilos of industrial goods and 1.13 cubic metres of timber. As a result, living conditions have been steadily improved.

Let's Go Behind...

(Continued from page 1)

and political problems this country has ever faced. It has caused a huge federal deficit and even with the surtax increase and the 6 billion dollars reduction in expenditures, it will continue to be a large deficit..."

The words of peace uttered by a Johnson, a Humphrey or a Nixon show that even the bagcaps of the two American parties have to reckon with public opinion in their own country.

It remains to be seen whether they mean what they have said.

THIS was which Washington's statesmen promise to bring to an end springing from the U.S. imperialists' attempt to annex South Viet Nam and turn it into a neo-colony and military base of the U.S. Was it not Ngo Dinh Diem's refusal to hold the elections as provided for by the Geneva Agreements for the reunification of Viet Nam and his bloody repression of all South Vietnamese patriots and democrats that triggered the concerted popular uprisings of 1960 which neither the "special war" nor the "limited war" conducted by the U.S. were able to prevent from developing into a powerful national resistance?

Distorting historical facts, the leaders of both American parties have done their utmost to explain away the origin of the Viet Nam war with the so-called "aggression by the North against the South," in other words, by the cheap "expansion of communism under the guise of liberation war" theory.

As a bad diagnosis leads to the prescription of wrong remedies to the evil, the Viet Nam issue can be settled only on the basis of the cessation of U.S. aggression and the respect for the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people. The U.S. must unconditionally stop its bombing and all other acts of war on the whole territory of the D.R.V.N., withdraw its troops and those of its satellites from South Viet Nam, recognise, and negotiate the settlement of South Vietnamese problems with the N.F.L., authentic representative of the South Vietnamese people. About all that, the political platforms of both American parties have not said a word. Johnson, Humphrey just as Nixon and company don't seem either to know anything about it.

THE Viet Nam — U.S. conversations in Paris are entering their 6th month: Their main objective, as everyone is aware, is to ascertain the unconditional cessation by the U.S. of the bombing and all other acts of war against North Viet Nam, so that the two sides can proceed to the discussion of other problems of both sides' concern. The bad faith of the American leaders has brought these conversations to a prolonged stalemate. All the verbal juggles, in which Washington's diplomats are past masters, have been resorted to to balk the unconditional cessation of the bombing:

"We are prepared to cease bombardment at the appropriate time and circumstances"

"We would like to know what will happen after the bombing stops."

"We hope that the D.R.V.N. will give us reason to believe that it is prepared to join with us in de-escalating the war and moving seriously towards peace."

Supervising, from the White House, the activities of his representative in Paris, the U.S. President, from time to time, rings the changes. "The bombing will not stop until we are confident that it will not lead to an increase in American casualties."

And the Republican presidential candidate, Mr Nixon, echoes this view by loudly proclaiming his "full support" to Johnson's persistent refusal to cease the bombing unconditionally.

As for Mr Humphrey, until now charged with being the shadow of the President, he has of late tried hard to keep some distance from his boss. On September 30, he made the following statement: "As President, I would be willing to stop the bombing of the North as an acceptable risk for peace because I believe it could lead to success in the negotiations and a shorter war, this would be the best protection for our troops." At first the statement sounded like a dramatic departure from Mr Johnson's views. In fact, it was but a piece of deception as our presidential candidate then continued, "In weighing that risk and before taking action, I would place first importance on evidence, direct or indirect, by deed or word, of communist willingness to restore the demilitarized zone between North and South Viet Nam."

Once again, Humphrey has lived up to his reputation as Johnson's carbon copy! Worse still, he went to the length of uttering the following menace which even Johnson has so far dared not make openly: "If the Government of North Viet Nam were to show bad faith, I would reserve the right to resume the bombing!"

THE D.R.V.N. representative at the Paris talks has many times reaffirmed in no equivocal terms that the Vietnamese people will never accept 'reciprocity' nor agree to a ransom to the cessation of the crimes, that U.S. bombardments of the D.R.V.N., a sovereign and independent state, are.

World public opinion is near unanimous in demanding an end to the U.S. criminal aggression, which is an imperative demand of the Vietnamese people as well as of all men of conscience. Only such a course of action can pave the way for the settlement of the Viet Nam problem. U Thant and French Foreign Minister Debré have just expressed a similar opinion once more.

The leaders, present or future, of Washington, are trying hard to raise a ballyhoo to sell their professed desire to see the Viet Nam war end at the earliest date. But neither their war intensification (which we have denounced and shall continue to denounce in our pages) nor their "peace" plans proclaimed in Washington, Chicago, Miami or Paris, are likely to mislead sharp observers who recognise them as real 'hawks,' diehards and incurable neo-colonialists.

The peace which they continue to dream of is a Pax Americana, ensured—under their previous plans—by "search-and-destroy" operations, and imposed—according to their more "modest" present designs—as a sequel to negotiations from a position of strength, secured through the application of the "clear-and-hold" strategy.

The Vietnamese people, firmly resolved to frustrate all the paltry projects of the U.S. aggressors, reject a priori any variant of Pax Americana. For them, peace can but be real peace in genuine independence.

A Commentary by the "Quan Doi Nhan Dan" (People's Army)

P.L.A.F. PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES IN SOUTH VIET NAM

THE daily *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* (People's Army), organ of the Viet Nam People's Army, has recently carried an article headlined: **"Resounding Victories, Immense Possibilities"** by its military commentator **Chien Thang**.

The article begins by noting that since mid-August, the P.L.A.F. have been assailing some hundred towns and townships, in the countryside and along key communication lines. Combining armed attacks of various size with political actions, they have raised to a high degree the effectiveness of their revolutionary onsets and achieved high combat efficiency in every theatre.

In less than two months, the P.L.A.F. successes have assumed far-reaching significance and opened up large prospects of development for the revolutionary forces, paving the way for more splendid exploits.

1 — A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF ENEMY MANPOWER AND MATERIALS WIPED OUT

ACCORDING to still incomplete statistics, 47 U.S. and puppet battalions and over 100 companies have been wiped out or decimated. Worthy of note is the fact that those crack units have been struck in their very bases or in the key defence network around Da Nang and Saigon. In the same period, 2 generals have been killed and another wounded. A large quantity of war means — particularly tanks and armoured cars — have been destroyed.

In putting out of action enemy manpower and materials, the P.L.A.F. have aggravated their weakness and rapidly tilted the balance of forces in favour of the revolution. They also have dealt a telling blow at U.S. "clear-and-hold" strategic plan.

2 — ENEMY DEFENCES BROKEN THROUGH

WITH their successes, the P.L.A.F. have broken the beginning foiled the plan of defence in depth adopted by the enemy. They have infiltrated into the heart of Da Nang and successfully attacked the provinces around Saigon particularly Tay Ninh, thus breaking through Abrams' 3-belt perimeter around the puppet "capital." Two-thirds of the battalions wiped out during the past two months have been put out of action in this area. The 1st, 9th and 25th U.S. divisions defending Saigon have suffered heavy losses.

Meanwhile, in other places, particularly in important country areas, the enemy military defence structure has also proved ineffective and sustained high casualties.

The following conclusion can be drawn: though the U.S. and puppet command has changed its strategic objectives and though instead of trying to "break the backbone of the V.C.," it is "holding" and making the troops fall back on certain positions with a view to limiting losses it has not been able to reverse the tide and its final failure is left in no doubt. Their plan of defence in depth has turned out to be ineffective and become a great burden. Its execution requiring a much too strenuous military effort, it has exacerbated the contradictions inherent in the strategy of the U.S. army: contradictions between the need of dispersing and that of concentrating troops, the defence of the towns and that of the countryside, the heavy tasks of the troops and their limited possibilities...

3 — THE LIBERATED AREAS ENLARGED AND CONSOLIDATED. THE N.F.L. POSITIONS STRENGTHENED AND THE ENEMY'S ONE INCREASINGLY SHAKEN

OVER the past two months, the South Viet Nam people and armed forces, coupling armed struggles with political actions, have liberated extensive rural areas. In the plains of Trung Bo, 248 concentration camps and "strategic hamlets" have been destroyed, and nearly 120,000 inhabitants freed from the enemy's yoke. In U.S. - Saigon-controlled areas, numerous petty tyrants have been duly punished. The machine of repression has been weakened and even smashed to pieces in certain places.

Revolutionary administration has been set up at village and district level and at provincial level in some places. This fact is highly significant from many viewpoints. It makes possible the consolidation of revolutionary bases in the countryside and the conquest of power on the whole territory of South Viet Nam. The prestige of the N.F.L. has risen ever higher. The recent founding of the Da Nang section of the **Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces** and the massive participation of Caodaist believers to popular uprisings in Tay Ninh testify to the increasing expansion of the United National Front against the U.S. aggressors.

4 — A NEW STEP FORWARD AND WIDE PROSPECTS

OVER the past two months, in the framework of the attacks of the revolutionary forces throughout South Viet Nam, the people and armed forces of Da Nang and Tay Ninh have recorded substantial progress.

After Saigon and Hue, Da Nang has risen up against U.S. puppet rule.

The uprisings of the urban population have strongly shaken the enemy's position in the towns.

Recent successes in Tay Ninh province provide evidence that new and great possibilities have emerged: possibility for "regular" and local forces to fight large-scale annihilation battles, possibility of boosting combat efficiency, possibility of carrying out protracted fighting.

The advances made by the P.L.A.F. are also illustrated by the accurate execution of fighting instructions, the clever choice of fighting methods and the efficient combination of large-scale with medium and small-scale actions, which has resulted in the destruction of important enemy forces.

THUS the military situation has changed in favour of the P.L.A.F. and to the detriment of the enemy. Though still persisting in their aggression, they will never be able to overcome the enormous difficulties that beset them.

1 — The U.S.A. has found no way to reinvigorate the puppet administration for the relation of forces in all theatres has definitely shifted in favour of the South Viet Nam people and armed forces. The prestige and the influence of the N.F.L. have been growing. More people from various strata of the population in the countryside as well as in the urban centres have rallied around the revolution to struggle resolutely for their liberation. The revolutionary forces have by far surpassed the counter-revolutionary forces. The U.S.A. cannot reverse the situation.

2 — The U.S.A. has not been able to find a working strategy suitable to the situation and capable of helping it achieve the political objectives of its neo-colonialist war of aggression. In spite of their great military efforts, the U.S. and puppet armed forces cannot meet the expected strategic requirements.

As a consequence of the alarming deterioration of the military and political situation, the political objectives assigned to the U.S. war prove far beyond the reach of any U.S. military plan. The favourite strategy of the U.S. expeditionary forces — offensive and counter-offensive — has gone bankrupt. The hastily adopted "clear-and-hold" strategy has not worked either and has given little indication of viability.

In the neo-colonialist war of aggression, no U.S. military strategy can make up for the lack of balance between the military and the political aspects, the disproportion between U.S. and Saigon troops. No U.S. strategy can match the invincible strength of the people's war.

The longer the U.S.A. persists in its war, the heavier its casualties and the more disastrous its military setbacks. However great it may be, U.S. military potential is not unlimited. Contradictions between the U.S. strategy of "limited war" in South Viet Nam and U.S. counter-revolutionary global strategy grow ever more irreconcilable. The recent U.S. heavy defeats show that the U.S.-imperialists, no matter how wilful they may be, cannot play on their criminal game. It is patent that their military failures are getting more serious with every passing day.

3 — Washington is incapable of placating dissenting opinion, in the world as well as in the U.S.A., which demands the end of U.S. aggression. Beaten in Viet Nam, L.B. Johnson has been forced to "dismiss" himself and to resort to the "limited bombing" trick. But it has not worked, and its narcotic effect on public opinion has rapidly vanished, while the indignation it has set off has given a strong impulse to the movement against the Johnson war. Defeatism has affected governmental circles in Washington. The United States is more "disunited" than ever because of the unjust character of the war and the U.S. reverses in Viet Nam. No magician can work miracles and save it as long as the war goes on.

COMMENTATOR **Chien Thang** in his article foresees a host of difficulties ahead for the South Vietnamese people in their march toward victory for the struggle will grow harder and the trials grimmer. But the favorable factors remain numerous and fundamental. Our difficulties are tenfold smaller than those besetting the enemy now driven to a corner. Inherent in a process of development, they can be surmounted by us.

For the Vietnamese people's national resistance to U.S. imperialism, the hardest time was when Washington massively despatched U.S. troops to South Viet Nam. The Vietnamese people have successfully tided it over and have been gaining resounding victories.

At present, their situation being a world more favourable than previously, in the flush of their past victories, they will certainly win through all difficulties, however "insurmountable" they may seem. The recent achievements have testified to the new and great possibilities of the South Viet Nam people and armed forces, **great and psychological possibilities** founded on a motivated resolve and an unshakable confidence; possibility of improving their **new strategic position** resulting from their unqualified military initiative; possibility of increasing qualitatively and quantitatively their new forces, which growth promises great achievements and will bring about high combat efficiency; possibility of taking advantage of the compound strength made up of all the forces brought into play by the revolutionary war in the military, political, economic and cultural field.

Consequently, the recent victories won by the South Viet Nam people and armed forces are very momentous ones and the possibilities of the South Viet Nam revolution are great. The prospects of the Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. aggression, for national salvation, are equally bright.

Foreign and Water...

(*Continued from page 1*)

anti-personnel bombs on the dyke network in Hung Long, Hung Khanh and Hung Phu villages, killing 26 people, wounding 39 others and causing heavy damage to 9 dyke portions.

"More barbarous still, the U.S. imperialists conducted night map-coordinated steel-pellet bombings against the civilian population. On the night of September 15 alone, 6 planes carried out map-coordinated bombings on a one-kilometre dyke portion in Hung Long village, killing 13 people and wounding 28 others. In Ha Tinh, between September 17 and 28, the dyke system along the La river was attacked 12 times, and Sept. 17 alone, many U.S. planes bombed the dyke of Duc Phong village, Duc Pho district, heavily damaging 3 portions.

"In Quang Binh, U.S. planes on September 23 struck at many dyke portions along the Kien Giang river while the water was rising high.

"The U.S. imperialists also intensified their attacks on water conservancy projects. On September 6 alone, 4 pumping stations in Thanh Chuong and Nam Dan districts in Nghe An province were damaged by bombs. On September 17 many flights of planes released many explosive bombs and C.B.U.s on the Thanh Lam pumping station, Thanh Chuong district.

"On September 18, 19 and 28, U.S. airforce concentrated its attacks on the sluice of Duc Hong village, Duc Thoi district, Ha Tinh province.

"Many dams such as the Cam Ly dam in Quang Binh, Ben Thuy and Nam Dan in Nghe An were time and again raided by U.S. planes.

"The above described frenzied airraids of the U.S. imperialists prove that they shrink from no savage methods in their attempts to massacre the people and destroy the essential public utility works in Viet Nam. These were utterly odious crimes condemned by international law and human ethics."

FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS

REFUSING SERVICE IN U.S. AGGRESSION IN VIET NAM IS LAWFUL

DO XUAN SANG
Law Research Institute of the D.R.V.N.

THE anti-U.S. aggressive war movement which has been daily growing in the United States has its juridical front. Back in 1962, the open letter of 16 American intellectuals to President Kennedy already drew the attention of the U.S. administration to the dirty and inhuman character of this war which, moreover, "has never received congressional sanction." Opposition to the dirty, inhuman and illegal war has increasingly become the watchword of the peace militants and the broad masses of the people in the United States.

It is to meet their aspirations that the Lawyers' Committee on American Policy Toward Viet Nam has undertaken to demonstrate, with chapter and verse, that the U.S. war of aggression in Viet Nam violates the 1954 Geneva Agreements, international law (especially the U.N. Charter) and the very Constitution of the United States. The Committee has refuted and dismissed the juridical Memorandum of Leonard C. Meeker, legal adviser to the U.S. State Department, on the so-called "legality of the U.S. participation in the defense of Viet Nam."

AN ILLEGAL AND CRIMINAL WAR

THE conclusions of the First Session of the B. Russell International Tribunal fully corroborated the thesis of progressive American lawyers, in its own refutation of the above-said official document of the U.S. administration:

"The essential argumentation formulated by this text consist of the assertion that American intervention in Viet Nam conforms only a simple aid to the Saigon Government against an aggression from the North. Such argumentation is untenable either *de jure* or *de facto*.

"*De jure*, it hardly needs recall that Viet Nam is one and a single nation and that one could not understand how she should commit aggression against herself.

"*De facto*, not a single proof of this so-called aggression has been produced so far. The figures released on the infiltrations of personnel from the North into the South, often contradictory, mixing up armed and unarmed persons, are quite contestable and at all events, could in no way justify the excuse of legitimate defence as provided for by article 51 of the U.N. Charter, as have done some of the other conditions of which was met after all."

Quite on the contrary, a close examining of U.S. intervention in Viet Nam which has been going on for more than 20 years in all fields, political, economic and military, in flagrant violation of positive international law, has enabled the International Tribunal to establish the full and complete responsibility of the U.S. Government which is guilty of the crime against peace, the crime of aggression against the fundamental rights of the Vietnamese people, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide.

The U.S. war of aggression has been judiciously termed "colonial war of aggression" which is both "illegal and criminal in terms of international law" by the resolution of I.A.D.L. Secretariat meeting from the 5th to 17th of September 1967 in Mamaia (Rumanian Socialist Republic). It constitutes, from the view point of international penal law, "a crime of aggression against independence and freedom, a crime against peace, war crimes of a particularly barbarous nature, crimes against humanity and veritable crimes of genocide against the very existence of an entire people. These crimes are indissolubly linked together by the colonialist nature of the war."

The above-said resolutions and verdicts were entirely confirmed by the World Conference of Lawyers for Viet Nam meeting from the 6th to 10th of July 1968 in Grenoble (France) and attended by 235 lawyers from 40 countries.

From the "illegal and criminal" character of the U.S. war of aggression, results the corollary that it is in the right of Americans to refuse to participate in it and that, on the other hand, there is no guilt on the part of any American citizens or foreigners who help any individual or group in his or its refusal to take part in this war.

One of the practical effects of such a conclusion is that it may bring about renunciation by all American jurisdictions of legal action against all "dissidents" or "deserters" in connection with the war in Viet Nam, and cancellation of the sentences already passed.

An American lawyer, Stanley Faulkner, attorney-at-law, in New York State and at the U.S. Supreme Court, demonstrated this in the speech he delivered before the 2nd Session of the B. Russell International Tribunal entitled "International Law and the Military Draft."

Faulkner began with recalling the age-old principle of responsibility in the eye of international law. Thus Hugo Grotius wrote in his famous treatise *De jure belli ac pacis* in 1645 that individual responsibility always existed in international law. It was by basing itself on this principle that the Nuremberg Tribunal rejected the defence of the Nazi criminals, all pleading that they had acted on orders from above. More recently, the Israeli Court rejected the plea of the Nazi Eichmann on the same ground. However, U.S. jurisdictions have ruled to the contrary in two well-known trials: the case of the Fort Hood Three and that of the Black American Ronald Lockman.

Three American soldiers garrisoned at Fort Hood, Texas, disobeyed an order to leave for Viet Nam. "Our reasons were that the war was illegal and immoral," they declared. "We could not bring ourselves to do something contary to our beliefs and involve ourselves in something which we would consider criminal."

They were court-martialled and sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

Young Ronald Lockman who had behaved in the same way and put up a similar defence was sentenced to two and half years' imprisonment. Before the U.S. court martial and, by appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court, the Counsel for the Fort Hood Three evoked both the U.S. Constitution and the international treaties which, in terms of the said Constitution, constitute also the supreme law of the land (of the United States): the Briand-Kellogg Pact, the U.N. Charter, the London Treaty of May 8, 1945 on the punishment of war criminals the annex of which forms the famous Statute of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal.

The defendants did not forget to mention, in order to refute its application, the S.E.A.T.O. treaty which could not prevail over the U.N. Charter and the Joint Resolution on the so-called "Tonkin Gulf incident" of August 10, 1964, which is neither a declaration of war nor a constitutionally acceptable delegation of powers by Congress to the President to declare war.

To this extremely serious argumentation, the U.S. justice has opposed an inept *fin de non-recevoir*, namely that this would be political, not juridical problems which escaped the cognizance of the courts of justice.

True enough, not all the nine judges of the Supreme Court agreed on the matter. The dissident opinion was proudly voiced by Justices William O. Douglas and Potter Stewart — which in the trial of the Fort Hood Three, raised the following juridical questions:

1) Is the present United States' military activity in Viet Nam a war within the meaning of Article 1, Sec. 8, Clause 11 of the Constitution?

And, if so, may the Executive, that is the President, constitutionally order the petitioners to participate in that military activity when no war has been declared by Congress?

2) Of what revelance are the present treaty obligations of the U.S.?

3) Of what relevance is the joint congressional Tonkin Bay resolution of August 10th, 1964?

4) Do the present U.S. military operations fall within the terms of the joint resolution?

5) If the joint resolution purports to give the Chief Executive authority to commit the United States to armed conflict limited in scope only by his own absolute discretion, is the resolution a constitutionally impermissible delegation of all or parts of Congress power to declare war?"

The Supreme Court of the U.S., or more exactly its anti-juridical majority, has chosen to quibble instead of holding substantial discussions of these "large and deeply troubling" questions.

THE GRENOBLE RESOLUTION

THE World Conference of Lawyers for Viet Nam meeting in Grenoble (France) has had the merit of invoking this important question in its agenda and to make it the theme of its fourth commission's report.

The following are large excerpts from the Resolution of this commission:

"Firstly, each juridical system ennunciates the principle according to which no State or government has the right to force its nationals to commit a crime.

"Secondly, while in the past it was considered that only the States would draw their obligations from international law, it is now established that individuals are also bound by international law to certain rights and especially some duties.

"The Nuremberg Tribunal declared that the very spirit of the London Agreement (which created this Tribunal and was promulgated on August 8th, 1946) lies in the fact that individuals have international duties that *transcend* the national obligations of obeyance imposed by their countries (English editior 1946, page 42).

"The same principle was adopted by the War Crimes Tribunal sitting in Tokyo.

"Above all, this fundamental principle applies to the conduct of a war of aggression, the supreme and most dangerous crime man has ever known.

"The combination of these two initial affirmations enables us to conclude: just as a State may not conduct a war of aggression, it may still less require from another State to which it may be bound by a treaty, or from an individual who may be in the service of this State, that they should commit such a grave offence against international law. In consequence, no individual can be obliged to obey any government whatsoever, if he is ordered to commit an act which would constitute an international crime. This rule is expressly recognized by the military code of many countries, *among them the United States of America.*" *

In other words, it is a question of settling an eventual conflict between international law (which recognizes the right of individuals and binds them to the obligation not to participate in a war of aggression) and national law (which calls up individuals and sends them to a war of aggression). The obligation under international law transcends the duty of obeyance to dissident national law.

In the specific case of the United States, the question is not exactly the same, because international law concerning war crimes has been incorporated into domestic law by way of duly ratified treaties, and recognized by the U.S. military court and therefore constitutes "the supreme law of the land" by virtue of an express provision of the 1787 Constitution. This is merely a conflict of domestic laws, between the supreme law and an illegal governmental order. Conflict which can be solved only by applying the "supreme law of the land."

The Grenoble Conference has thus come to a conclusion of particular authority:

The World Conference of Lawyers for Viet Nam which gathers more than 1,000 members native of 40 countries, among them eminent specialists of international law and penal law, express its firm opinion that a fundamental principle of international law confers on individuals in all countries the duty to refuse obeyance to the order to participate in a war of aggression. But those who help individuals in their refusal to participate in such a war must be, therefore, considered innocent of all offence.

What can be the attitude of U.S. jurisdictions? The independence of the judges being only a bluff under the "presidential democracy" of the United States, it is very unlikely that the U.S. courts would readily listen to reason. Recently, after the retirement of Earl Warren, Johnson appointed his lawyer Abe Fortas to the U.S. Supreme Court. About this Yale-educated Bachelor of Law, a former Counsel to the big monopolies who has probably saved Johnson's political career at a time when it was in deep waters, *U.S. News and World Report* said he has become one of the personal legal advisers to the President, "giving him private counsel on virtually all questions." Was this far-fetched political nomination be intended to strengthen the yes-yes majority of the U.S. Supreme Court which will soon have to deal with the case of Benjamin Spock who condemnation by the Federal Court of Boston has touched off an extensive wave of indignation in the United States and throughout the world?

The famous pediatrist, sentenced on July 10, 1968, together with three other opponents of the Viet Nam war, on charge of inciting draft-age youth to insubmission, has defined his stance as following: "The war in Viet Nam is illegal and immoral and the United States is being led to disaster by a bellicose administration. The young

(*Continued page 7*)

* *Italics are author's.*

23rd Anniversary of Laos Proclamation of Independence

(October 12, 1945)

23-Year Long Glorious Struggle

THE capitulation of the Japanese fascists in August 1945 in face of the sweeping offensive of the Soviet Army offered a most favourable opportunity for the Lao people to rise up and wrest back power. Together with the peoples of Viet Nam and Cambodia, they staged a general insurrection in all urban centres. The rapid collapse of the Japanese fascists' and French colonialists' rule brought about the total disintegration of the puppet administration.

The August general insurrection of the Lao people ended successfully: a Provisional Central Government was set up. It comprised representatives of various strata of the people among them Prince Souphanouvong, a well-known Lao patriot. On October 12, 1945, it appeared before the nation and solemnly proclaimed the sovereignty and independence of Laos before the world.

NINE - YEAR LONG RESISTANCE TO FRENCH COLONIALISM

FAR from giving up their aggressive schemes, the French colonialists tried to restore their rule over Laos. They mounted attacks on many provinces, and more particularly on March 21, 1946 struck at Thakhet, provincial capital of Khammouane, savagely massacring hundreds of innocent people, which touched off the Lao national war of resistance. Only a few months after its formation, the Provisional Government had to face a professional army, far better equipped, and countless difficulties. Some of its ministers sought refuge in Thailand, others withdrew to the countryside and mountain areas to organize the masses for a protracted war of resistance. A gradual split took place within the government: while some members defected to the enemy, the rest, under the leadership of Prince Souphanouvong carried on the resistance in which they made a combined use of different forms of political and armed struggle. Guerrilla warfare was waged throughout the country and caused heavy losses to the aggressors and their henchmen.

In the end, defeated by the Indo-Chinese peoples, the French colonialists backed by the American imperialists had to sign the 1954 Geneva Agreements. For the first time in history, an international convention recognized the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Laos, Viet Nam and Cambodia, and put an end to French domination over the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

RESISTANCE TO U.S. INTERVENTION AND AGGRESSION
(Since 1954)

TAKING advantage of the weakening position of the French colonialists, the U.S. imperialists infiltrated into Laos through the channel of their economic "aid," with which they bribed reactionary elements and set up a puppet administration in order to turn Laos into a new-type colony and military base. They repeatedly and seriously violated the Geneva Agreements of 1954 on Laos, attacked the two provinces of Samneua and Phongsaly where the *Pathet Lao* forces had been regrouped, suppressed the people's struggle throughout the country and assassinated many former resisters.

In January 1956, the National Congress of the *Neo Lao Itsala* (Lao Front for Independence) changed its name into *Neo Lao Haksat* (Lao Patriotic Front). It published a statement requiring from the Lao Royal Government a policy of peace and neutrality to bar the way to U.S. intervention and put Laos on the path to true independence.

Under the clear-sighted and firm leadership of the *Neo Lao Haksat* headed by Prince Souphanouvong, the Lao people put up a resolute struggle which resulted in the signing in 1957 of the Vientiane Agreement and the establishment of the first national union government with the participation of the *Neo Lao Haksat*. In the 1958 additional parliamentary election the *Neo Lao Haksat* won nine seats in the Royal National Assembly.

But the American imperialists and their henchmen could not make up their minds to those tremendous successes of the Lao people. They had again recourse to armed forces to stamp out the patriotic movement. The Lao people throughout the country rose up and dealt telling political and military blows at the enemy who were forced to sign the tripartite agreements of Zurich (1961) and of the Plain of Jars (1962) and to agree to the formation of a new Tripartite Union National Government made up of *Neo Lao Haksat*, neutralist and right-wing representatives. All this led to the signing on July 23, 1962, of the Geneva Agreements recognizing the sovereignty, independence, neutrality and territorial integrity of Laos.

However, the U.S. imperialists, aggressive by nature, left no stone unturned to undermine the international agreements, immediately after their signing. They assassinated neutralist Foreign Minister Quinim Pholsena, and staged the April 19, 1964 putsch to overthrow the Tripartite National Union Government. They set up a puppet government headed by "Premier" Prince Souvanna Phouma with a view to fooling public opinion and in furtherance of their intervention and aggression. Since May 17, 1964, their jet planes of various types including B.52 superfortresses have been flying bombing, strafing and toxic chemical spraying missions over areas controlled by the Lao patriotic forces. The Washington-led U.S. "special war" against the Lao people has been stepped up. Countless "mopping up" operations and large-scale military offensives have been mounted by the Vientiane army — infested with U.S. advisers — on areas controlled by the *Neo Lao Haksat* and neutralist forces. In so doing, U.S. imperialism has been piling up crimes, have murdered countless innocent civilians, destroyed innumerable families, villages, pagodas, hospitals and schools.

LAO REVOLUTION'S SUCCESS — A WORTHY CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD PEOPLES' COMMON VICTORY

BURNING with hatred for the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen, the Lao people and their armed forces have successfully repelled all illegal nibbling attacks against the liberated areas and all looting raids, putting out of action tens of thousands of enemy troops, capturing thousands of tons of U.S. equipment, downing over 800 U.S. planes. During the 1967-1968 dry season, they wiped out more than one-fourth of the enemy troop strength (over 16,000 troops) and a major part of the enemy's mobile forces including 20 battalions of various regular units and of special forces. They liberated over 16,000 inhabitants and recovered extensive territories illegally annexed. These victories have contributed to the defence of the liberated zone now covering two-thirds of the territory with half of the Lao population — which has been unceasingly strengthened in the political military, economic and cultural fields.

The *Neo Lao Haksat* political line has struck deep roots in the people. Its prestige has been on the upgrade in the international arena. The growing patriotic neutralist forces have been standing shoulder to shoulder with it in the struggle against U.S. aggression, for a peaceful, independent, neutral, democratic, unified and prosperous Laos. The militant alliance between these two forces has been consolidated with every passing day.

The Lao people's resistance to U.S. aggression, for national salvation, has entered into a new and decisive phase. The path followed by the Lao people since October 12, 1945 is a rough and thorny one. But, thanks to the clear-sighted leadership of the *Neo Lao Haksat*, guided by Prince Souphanouvong, they have surmounted every obstacle and achieved ever bigger successes.

In its long struggle for national independence and particularly in its present resistance against U.S. imperialism, the Lao revolution has never ceased enjoying the assistance of the brother peoples in Indo-China and the support of Asian, African, Latin American countries and peace-loving countries in the world. On the other hand, with their increasingly substantial successes, the heroic people of Laos have made their worthy contribution to the common victory of the Asian, African and Latin American peoples and the revolutionary forces in the world in their struggle against imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism for independence, peace and social progress.

TO THE READER

We are aware that there is much room for improvement in the wording of our paper. We apologize for this shortcoming and highly appreciate all your suggestions as they will help us to serve you more efficiently in future.

THAILAND VIETNAMESE NATIONALS PERSECUTED AND FORCED BACK TO SOUTH VIET NAM

ACCORDING to Western reports, the Thailand authorities have brazenly deported of, or taken to unknown destination, a number of Vietnamese nationals illegally arrested by them in Udon and Nong Khai provinces. They are colluding with the Saigon puppet administration to force the rest of the detainees to go to South Viet Nam. On October 2 and 3, thousands of Vietnamese nationals in the two above-mentioned provinces staged in front of local administrative organs protest demonstrations against the Thai authorities.

Reuter confirmed on October 4 that the Thai government had actually forced a number of Vietnamese residents, charged with participation in activities "harmful to the security of Thailand," back to areas under U.S.-puppet control in South Viet Nam. Such charge is sheer fabrication for Vietnamese nationals in Thailand have always been abiding by the law and respecting the manners and customs of the places they live in, and have been doing their shares in the development of local economy. For this, they have won the love of the Thai people. The most dangerous enemy to the security of Thailand is none other than the U.S. imperialists that are turning that country into a dry aircraft carrier, using it as a base for their aggression against Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia in the neighbourhood, and forcing young Thais to serve as cannon-fodder for them in South Viet Nam.

The reactionary administration in Thailand can by no means cover up their criminal role as willing tools of the U.S. imperialists.

The persecution of Vietnamese nationals in Thailand and the forcible "repatriation" of these people to enemy-occupied areas in South Viet Nam are completely illegal. With these moves, the reactionary Thai administration has brutally trampled on the fundamental principles of international law on foreign residents' right of asylum. They have overtly sabotaged the agreements reached between the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the Thai Red Cross which stipulate for regard by the Thai administration for the aspirations of Vietnamese nationals who have registered for repatriation to North Viet Nam.

In a statement made public on October 9, the spokesman of the D.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry energetically protested against the Thai authorities' persecution and coercion of Vietnamese nationals to repatriate to South Viet Nam. The rulers in Bangkok must release at once those Vietnamese now under detention, put an end to all terrorist acts, and see to the safety of the lives, property and to the legitimate rights of Vietnamese nationals as provided for by international law and the agreements between the D.R.V.N. Red Cross and the Thai Red Cross, the statement said.

In South Viet Nam Liberated Zone

HEALTH SERVICE MAKES HEADWAY

SINCE early spring this year, South Viet Nam's health service has been making remarkable contributions to the common victory of the local armed forces and people.

In the Saigon — Cholon — Gia Dinh sector, doctors, assistant doctors, nurses and first-aid personnel always stick to their work even in the thick of the fighting, supplying medical care to combatants and civilians. In the rear line, many doctors, assistant doctors, nurses and other medical workers at times work round the clock examining and tending the wounded. Fired by the spirit of serving unconditionally, the medical personnel has found many innovations, constantly improves technique and overcomes difficulties in giving first-aid care and medical treatment to the wounded. As a result, the mortality rate among them hardly reaches 0.4 per cent and the incapacity rate has been reduced to the minimum, while the shortened treatment time enables the wounded to rejoin their units at the earliest date.

In Tay Ninh, My Tho and other provinces the local health service has set up shock surgeons' teams to operate in the firing-line or mobile medical teams comprising doctors, assistant doctors, nurses and first-aid agents to care for cadres, combatants and civilians in areas of grim fighting, such as those in the vicinity of provincial capitals and district towns and adjacent to important communication lines.

In An Giang, the mobile surgeons' team and medical team under the charge of doctors and assistant doctors hold on to the battlefield, and go down to villages and hamlets in the Hoa Hao church area and on the outer fringe of Long Xuyen provincial capital to give medical attention to those wounded by enemy bombs or shells.

To meet the immense field requirements in the period of generalized attacks, South Viet Nam's Civil Health Service has opened crash courses for more personnel and at the same time expanded and improved the medical network at grass-root level. In the first 6 months of this year alone, the health service in the central part of Nam Bo (South Viet Nam proper) trained 491 first-aid agents, 160 nurses, 74 assistant doctors, 101 mid-wives and 22 assistant pharmacists. In addition, it has run first-aid courses for the people. Cai Lay district in particular has opened training classes for 147 first-aid agents and 10 mid-wives, refresher courses for 150 medical workers, 146 first-aid training courses for the people and assisted 2,056 families in building medicine chests.

The training of medical workers of minority origin has also been carried out successfully. In Tay Nguyen (High Plateaux) alone, thousands of medical workers from ethnic groups have been turned out, including 30 doctors and 165 assistant doctors, pharmacists and assistant pharmacists. In the liberated areas of Tay Nguyen, there is on an average one medical worker for every 500 inhabitants.

Along with the efforts in field work, hygiene and prophylactic work has been substantially expanded among civilians. Backward habits and customs harmful to the living and production are being gradually eliminated. Since the beginning of this year, the Civil Health Service of My Tho province has obtained great successes in this respect. It has guided tens of thousands of people to practice hygiene and prophylaxis, encouraged the people to make cess-pools and bath-rooms and build and strengthen shelters to limit losses caused by enemy bombing and shelling and organised thousands of first-aid teams in villages and hamlets. In the mountain areas of Ninh Thuan province, village health, organs have encouraged the local people to adopt the new way of life. Besides guiding hygiene and prophylactic work, health organs of various localities have given innoculations against cholera, typhoid fever and other epidemics.

In the first 3 months of this year alone, My Tho medical workers inoculated against smallpox and cholera more than 203,000 growing-up children. In Go Dau district (Tay Ninh) medical workers penetrated into the An Phu strategic hamlet and gave anti-bubonic plague shots to its inmates who expressed deep gratitude for the N.F.L.

South Viet Nam's civil health service has also recorded great achievements in using both Western and Eastern medicine to treat patients. In Central Nam Bo, health bodies have made use of both Eastern and Western medicine in the treatment, covering internal and external pathology, obstetrics and gynaecology, of 61,754 people and have issued 52,000 traditional medicine prescriptions to patients.

Pharmaceutical production has also been stepped up. In the first 3 months of this year alone, the pharmaceutical workshops of Central Trung Bo has put out a volume of medicines, 1 phials and in tablets, bigger than that of the whole year of 1967. A number of new medicines successfully researched on in 1967, such as the anti-shock NT9, ferrous sulphate and pure salt are now being produced. Last May, the pharmaceutical service of Tay Ninh province turned out 18 kinds of good-quality medicine at low production costs, thus saving 23,403 "dong" for the Public Funds. From early spring to the end of June, the civil health service of Central Trung Bo prepared 46,400 phials of various injectable solution, 77,800 pills and 2 million anti-cholera doses. Kien Tuong and An Giang provinces in particular have done fruitful research on, and produced powdered antibiotics and anti-malaria pills from traditional medicinal herbs.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

(Continued from page 8)

NORTHERN QUANG TRI

1,800 Enemy Troops Including 1,000 G.I.'s Put out of Action in 15 Days Ending October 8.

ON October 4, *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported, 2 companies of U.S. Marines patrolling 11 kilometres North of **Tan Lam** ("Rockpile" for the Americans) were fiercely engaged by the P.L.A.F. Rushing downhill to charge the advancing enemy column, the P.L.A.F. killed or wounded over one hundred men and put to flight the rest. Thus within 15 days (from September 1 to October 5), the U.S.-puppet command lost in the area of **Highway No 9, Con Tien** and **Gio Linh** (North of Dong Ha), 1,500 men, including 1,000 G.I.'s killed, wounded or captured, 12 planes and helicopters downed, over 40 vehicles (one third of them tanks and armoured cars) destroyed.

For American Citizens...

(Continued from page 5)

men who refuse to fight in this war need a legal and moral support."

In terms of international law as well as the prevailing internal law of the U.S., Dr Spock as well as the young men whom he generously supports have committed no offence and must not therefore be liable to any punishment.

Would the political jurisdiction of the United States escalate the anti-law drive and the negation of the 1787 Constitution? Such an escalation which would cast shame on the American nation could but lead the U.S. to a complete fiasco just as the war escalation itself.

The world's lawyer give consensus to the resolution of Grenoble and are supporting it vigorously. It is our firm conviction that the progressive laywers and people in America would follow suit.

After all, the last say in this question rests with progressive law, expression of the firm will of the friends of justice, peace and progress throughout the world.

CORRECTION

In *Viet Nam Courier* No 183, page 4, column 4, 2nd line, *Prosecutor of the Republic of Bomako* should be read: *Prosecutor of the Republic in Bamako.*

Editor's Note.— Mortar Platoon leader Pham Ngoc Van has been awarded the title of "Valiant Anti-U.S. Fighter" on three occasions, and a Military Exploit Medal, third class. In his 47th engagement, despite his seven wounds, he repelled an attack by an enemy group, killing three.

The following story is that of his feat.

7 Wounds, 3 Aggressors Killed

A small shell splinter hit him in the chin and blood oozed. Van fell on his knees. Han limped out of the shelter and helped him in.

Van had not lost his calm, although a green pallor showed that he had lost much blood. He said to himself, "The seventh wound! Pretty serious, isn't it?" He successively touched his wounds on the chin, the hip, the left leg. He looked up at Ban, the only man remaining with him; Ban was also wounded, in the right leg. Both suppressed their pain and did a final check-up on their grenades. They waited.

Dusk fell. Two silhouettes appeared: two guerillas carrying a stretcher. They rushed towards Van and Ban as soon as they spotted them. One said, looking at Van's numerous wounds, "We have only one stretcher. We'll take the worse off first."

Van quickly thought to himself, "All right, I am the worse hit one. But I am the C.O., and know the terrain well. Ban is a newboy, a green horn. Let him go first."

In a calm and determined voice, he said to the stretcher-bearers, "Take him first" and pointed to Ban.

"You're more seriously wounded," his young comrade protested. "You should be attended to first."

"Do as I said," Van answered, "I am the commander. Leave me your two grenades."

Van felt exhausted. His forehead was beaded with sweat: the pain from his wounds was unbearable. He signalled the guerillas to carry Ban away.

Day broke. The roar of chopper engines woke Van up. He had lost consciousness since the guerillas left. A few helicopters had flown in and were circling overhead. One descended at a lower altitude and opened fire at random. "Should strike first," Van said to himself.

He crawled out of the shelter, undid the safety pins of three grenades and laid them in front of him. A fourth one he held right in his hand.

A U.H. 1 landed about sixty metres away. Six Americans and a South Korean mercenary alighted, and headed for a nearby cluster of houses. Van followed them with his eyes. Ten minutes later, they returned.

They did not come back straight away to their helicopter, but made a detour which took them close to Van's hiding place. His heart was beating wildly while the pain caused by his wounds almost made him faint. He tried to stand up, leaning against the wall of the shelter.

The enemy had come nearer. The soldiers in the lead was in fact so close that Van could even see a scar on his bared forearm. Van tossed a grenade. A flash and a sharp explosion: two Yanks fell; the South Korean mercenary staggered a few more steps, howling with pain, then collapsed in his turn. The survivors dashed off towards the helicopter. Van hurled a second grenade. Another Yank was hit, but he managed to run on. The helicopter took off in a roar and a swirl of dust.

In the joy of victory, Van forgot about his pain. He crawled towards the bodies of the enemy killed, quickly snatched their submachineguns, and made his way toward an area covered with elephant grass some distance away. Hiding himself in a thicket, he cocked all three guns and laid them beside him, together with the remaining grenades. He knew that the enemy would come back.

Minutes later, a chopper came, followed by four M.113 armoured personnel carriers. The vehicles headed for where the dead G.I.s and South Korean were lying, firing aimlessly. Troops got off and started a search, which proved fruitless. From his place of hiding, Van kept his eyes glued on them. As the armoured vehicles drove away, he collapsed, exhausted.

At the first-aid station, a nurse gently cut up with a pair of scissors the blood-soaked clothes of a wounded P.L.A.F. man. Moistening the pieces with warm water, she tried to detach them from the blood-clotted patches on his body. When she finished, she cleaned the wounds and bandaged them. Only then did she learn his name and was she told about his exploits.

The heroic fighter was Pham Ngoc Van: he had gone without food and water for two days, received seven wounds, but had none the less killed three enemy troops and captured their weapons.

ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT

Military Operations

IN the Mekong Delta laced with an intricate network of "rach" (small rivers), the tactics of Riverine Task Forces, a new version of the French colonialists' "Dinassaut" (Storm Naval Division) in the Indo-China war has just suffered a new disaster in Ben Tre province, again on the Giong Trom River.

Within 40 days of fighting, from September 29 to October 2, the P.L.A.F. sank or burned 19 boats, and motor-sampans, downed 6 planes and helicopters and put out of action about 1,000 G.I.'s.

North of Saigon, they wiped out on October 4 a regrouped position, annihilating 4 companies and destroying 31 tanks and armoured cars. Two days later, near Loc Ninh, 300 U.S. puppet troops were put out of action, 40 tanks and armoured cars destroyed.

In the Northern part of South Viet Nam battles North of Highway No 9, near the 17th parallel, took a heavy toll of adverse lives; in 15 days, from September 21 to October 5, 1,500 American and puppet casualties (including 1,000 G.I.'s).

Central Trung Bo has been the scene of fierce fighting around camp Thuong Duc, an outpost South-West of Da Nang—which has been encircled by patriotic forces in spite of intense bombings and helibORne reinforcements. On October 6, U.S. bases near Da Nang were pounded. On October 1, 3 puppet companies were wiped out or decimated near Quang Ngai, 2 puppet companies and a U.S. platoon annihilated North-West of Qui Nhon.

The first returns of enemy casualties in provinces (September) shed light on a highly significant fact: guerilla around towns and other urban centres in 10 provinces (7 in the Mekong Delta) inflicted on the enemy losses estimated at 1,400 killed or wounded (several hundred by "rudimentary" traps).

Ben Luc bridge blasted out of order by a P.L.A.F. attack on the night of October 4, 1968

SAIGON AREA AND MEKONG DELTA

— 19 U.S. Boats Sunk or Burnt, 1,000 G.I.'s Killed or Wounded on the Giong Trom River.

— A Regrouped Position Stormed, 6 Companies Wiped Out Near Hon Quan.

— 200 G.I.'s Put out of Action North-West of Tay Ninh.

ON September 29, *Giai Phong* Press Agency reported, local troops of **Ben Tre** province beat off 3 puppet companies and wiped out a U.S. company at Luong Hoa, 8 kilometres South-East of the provincial capital. On the next day, attacking heliborne U.S. forces, they destroyed another company and downed 6 aircraft. Meanwhile, resisting the landing by river of a puppet battalion, they sank 2 motor-sampans loaded with ammunition. On October 2, a 30-boat flotilla with a U.S. battalion aboard churned down the **Giong Grom river** to rescue troops pinned down there into an ambush at Luong Hoa, and had 17 boats sunk or burnt and 700 G.I.'s put out of action. Enemy losses in 4 days totalled **nearly 1,000 G.I.'s killed or wounded, 19 boats and other military boats sunk or burnt, 4 helicopters downed, a great haul of weapons and ammunition captured by the P.L.A.F.**

95 kilometres North of Saigon and 3 kilometres South-West of Hon Quan, provincial capital of Binh Long, the P.L.A.F. stormed on October 4 a U.S.-puppet regrouped position at **Xa Cam**. After an intense artillery fire which upset from top to bottom the the enemy defence network, they started thrusts into the camp, wiped it out after a 40 minutes' close combat, flattening the C.P. (a major killed), a U.S. armoured company and 3 puppet companies, destroying or setting afire 31 tanks and armoured cars.

Further North, near **Loc Ninh**, a U.S. battalion reinforced by a puppet company and backed by a hundred tanks and armoured cars was attacked on Oct. 6. The P.L.A.F. put out of action 300 enemy troops, destroyed or burnt 40 armoured cars and foiled the operation. Further West, a detachment of 400 G.I.'s assaulted on October 3 near **Lo Go** (44 kilometres North-West of Tay Ninh) lost 200 men killed or wounded and many weapons.

P.L.A.F. artillery was very active in this area. It slammed shells into a gun emplacement of the U.S. 25th Division 22 kilometres North-West of Saigon and the H.Q. of the puppet 25th Division at **Duc Hoa**, 25 kilometres West of Saigon (October 3); the **Ben Luc** 500-metre long bridge, nearly 20 kilometres South-West of the Saigon suburbs, partly destroying a pillar (October 5); military and administrative installations in **Rach Gia** City and its air strip (October 7); the C.P. of the **Binh Chanh** Subsector at the gate of Saigon and 2 positions of the U.S. 25th and 101st Division (October 8). On October 10, a tanker of 13,000 tons on the Saigon river was hit in its engine-room and was within an ace of going to the bottom.

On the night of September 28 to 29, the mortaring of administrative and military structures in **Tra Vinh** city set off an uprising of the people which duly punished local petty tyrants and loosened the enemy's grip. The movement spread to 3 other districts of the province. In one day, some hundred enemy agents, particularly torturers and thugs, were made away with.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN TRUNG BO

— Thuong Duc Encircled and Almost Daily Under Fire.

— 8 Enemy Companies Wiped Out or Depleted in Go Huynh Area (Quang Ngai) and Phu My (Binh Dinh).

— 1 U.S. Company Wiped Out Near Duc Lap.

THE **Thuong Duc** outpost, 40 kilometres South-West of Da Nang, encircled since September 28, has been repeatedly under fire, particularly on October 3, 6 and 8. Several detachments of U.S. Marines sent in as well as countless raids of the U.S. tactical and strategic air force have failed in relieving it.

On October 6, the P.L.A.F. shelled several U.S. military installations near **Da Nang**, (among them the C.P. of the engineering troops.)

In **Quang Ngai** province, attacks on the town and district capitals (from September 21 to 30) resulted in 600 men put out of action, 4 planes and helicopters downed, 650 detainees of the provincial prison set free.

On October 1, 8 kilometres West of Quang Ngai in the **Go Huynh** area where the enemy had lost about 1,000 men on August 22 and September 2, the P.L.A.F. wiped out or decimated 3 puppet companies, grounded 1 plane and captured tons of collective or individual weapons.

Further South, on September 28, a U.S. platoon was written off the musterroll and 3 helicopters shot down near **Phu My** (48 kilometres North-West of Qui Nhon) while 3 kilometres away, 6 puppet companies were fiercely intercepted: 2 of them were wiped out in the very place where 1 battalion had been knocked out. According to Western sources, a puppet company came under a violent onset on October 9 near **Tam Quan**, 85 kilometres North of Qui Nhon, a rescue armoured company suffered the same fate, both units taking heavy casualties. Near Tuy Hoa, in **Phu Yen** province, a puppet company was put out of action on September 25, losing 95 killed and many wounded.

All in all, in the last 10 days of September, in the coastal provinces of Trung Bo, the enemy were attacked in 5 towns and 17 urban centres; they had 4,500 men killed, wounded or captured, 144 vehicles and 21 cannons destroyed, 133 planes or helicopters shot down or burnt on the ground.

On the **Western High Plateaux**, in **Duc Lap** area, Liberation forces wiped out on September 30, after a 45 minutes' combat, 1 U.S. company on Highway No 14, South-West of the place: over 100 G.I.'s were killed or wounded, many weapons seized. On October 6 and 8, they pounded a military training camp North of **Pleiku** and the **Sar Pa** post near Duc Lap.

(Continued page 7)

True Tale of People's War

The Old Wives' Battle

THAT morning, on an entrance into the enemy post, the village of B. (Quang Nam) raised a 6-metre high "Monument of Wrath" inscribed with the names and ages of those murdered by U.S. aggressors. A N.F.L. flag fluttered on top the memorial.

"Incoming chopper !", the warning went.

As predicted, the enemy was moving out. At the same time an armoured column rumbled towards the monument. In two prongs, enemy troops encircled village B. A rather large force was hurled into the raid. The villagers, old and young, men and women, immediately took up position, ready to face the raiders. Old ladies stopped their farm work and marched abreast, hand in hand, to meet the armoured column.

The helicopter coming in from the East circled over the monument then made a landing. A Yankee, the gun pressed against his hip, reached out his hand for the flag. A deafening explosion was set off, killing him and all his mates and blasting the copter to pieces. Seeing that the mine had hit home, the villagers began to crowd around the armoured column: "This site has been chosen to honor the memory of the victims of your cruelty. You must not run your cars over this sacred place."

"The killers must pay for their crimes," shouted someone.

The Yankees pushed some puppet soldiers ahead to confront the protesters. A mother said to a group of puppet troops massing before the monument to read the inscriptions on it, "You see, that is Bon. She was at home busy bringing up her children peacefully when the post commander, Giang, ordered his men to arrest her and torture her to death. There is also the name of an old man from the hamlet over there. He was tending his grand-children when the raiding G.I.'s killed him in cold-blood right in his home with a burst of gun-fire. There is no end of similar stories. You claim that you have joined the armed forces to defend your people, yet you leave your people to be killed mercilessly like that. What a shame! What do you think about that?"

Many puppet soldiers were nearly moved to tears and N.F.L. leaflets were then handed to them.

Seeing this, U.S. C.O.s called in more armoured cars to intimidate the villagers. Fearlessly, the crowd closed in on them tighter. Two of the armoured cars backed up and tried to take another way towards the monument to flatten the whole area, but rolled on a minefield laid by guerrillas. Deafening explosions shattered both vehicles. As confusion and panic seized the enemy, the villagers dispersed quickly and from their underground tunnel, the guerillas popped out and cut the Yankees down with a withering fire...